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ABSTRACT

This report contains the results of a survey sent to 2,883 librarians throughout Pennsylvania, both members and nonmembers of the Pennsylvania Library Association (PLA). The nonmembers of PLA were members of the American Library Association (ALA), however. The total response rate was 21% (n=620). There were recurring themes in the responses from both groups: the PLA is too oriented toward public libraries and the dues are too high. The PLA members also reported dissatisfaction with the local chapters, a need for continuing professional education, Legislative Day could be improved, the annual conference is the "crown jewel" of the organization, a lack of activity in western Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania library associations need to be united, appreciation for PLA's avoidance of special interest politics, and the PLA should work for higher member salaries. The survey accomplished three things: (1) the association better understands what the membership thinks; (2) there is a better definition of who makes up the membership; and (3) it defines a target market to expand membership base. Three appendices contain salary charts and membership charts, comments of PLA members, and comments of ALA-not-PLA respondents. (DGM/BEW)

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**Pennsylvania Library Association,
Membership Survey, 1994**

by
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The PLA Membership Survey The Full Report

This full report on the membership survey will include the information presented in the summary report. It will also include a digest of the comments, an appendix with all the comments, and some additional statistics and graphing.

The PLA membership survey initiative came out of the PLA membership committee. The association had a number of characterizations of the membership which were born of experience, but could not be quantified. This survey attempts to validate or dispel those notions.

Response to the survey was strong and included many comments. These were witty, cutting, complementary, insightful and thought provoking. All were welcome.

In all 2,883 surveys were sent out. These were divided into two groups. There were 1,279 surveys mailed to PLA members, 1,604 were mailed to ALA members who were not also PLA members. Of the 1,279 sent to PLA members there were 442 responses or 34%. Of the 1,604 set to ALA members, 178 responded amounting to 11%. Together there were 620 responses or 21%.

Clearly, the membership welcomed the opportunity to comment on the organization. On reading the comments, it appears that the survey has provided a much needed vent. There are many fine ideas and legitimate criticisms. Each one should be given consideration. It is not enough to read the following digest of comments.

Reoccurring Themes

There were some items that reoccurred several times from the ALA-but-not-the-PLA Group. These are instructive as to why they have not joined PLA.

1. Who is PLA?
There was some interest in learning about PLA and its activities.
2. PLA is too public library oriented.
This group had a higher percentage of non Public Library respondents. Naturally, they would be looking for relevance to their work.
3. Dues are too high.

Per person, this group holds significantly more memberships and cannot justify the time and money it would take to be a member of PLA.

PLA members had quite a few more comments. The reason is probably twofold. 1) there were more PLA surveys returned and 2) they have a vested interest in the organization. Some of the same themes were echoed here.

- 1) Too oriented toward public libraries. Along with the voices from the academic libraries, the criticism also emanated from school librarians.
- 2) Dues are too high. Along with this are several suggestions for special rates to attract part-time and unemployed librarians.
- 3) There were several comments on the dissatisfaction with chapters and divisions.
- 4) A plea for continuing education appeared several times.
- 5) There were good comments on how to improve Legislative Day. The general feeling was that this could be done more effectively.
- 6) The annual conference was often applauded. It is truly the crown jewel of the organization.
- 7) Several comments complained about a lack of presence and activity in Western PA.
- 8) There were calls to unite the fragmented library associations in PA.
- 9) Several members warned of, or were grateful that PLA stayed out of special interest politics. To their way of thinking, ALA has made a real mistake here.
- 10) Finally, many of the members felt PLA should work for higher salaries for librarians

Of The PLA Membership

Survey returns represented 56 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. The top 5 reporting counties were, in descending order, Allegheny, Montgomery, Delaware, Lackawanna, and Dauphin. Together these five counties represented 127 responses or 31%.

The educational attainment of the membership is clearly dominated by the MLS degree. A total of 304 respondents report earning this. Another 92 reported additional graduate work.

Question 3 asked what best describes your place of work. An oversight in this question was the omission of a category for school library. Considering that 14 members reported being members of PSLA, it would be reasonable to think that school libraries constitute a portion of PLA about the same size as special libraries.

By far, the largest group was public libraries with a count of 195. Academic libraries made up 88, library system 43, 26 in

special libraries and 10 in government libraries.

In reporting the size of the work place, the greatest numbers appeared at the lowest and highest ends of the range. 135 reported working with 20 or more staff and 87 reported working with 1-5 staff. The majority of those responding listed administration and full time librarian as best describing their work.

As one would expect, salaries were an often mentioned concern. Combining the salary categories into 3 large groups, we find the following; 22% of report salaries of \$20,000 or less, 50% earn between \$20-40,000 and 27% earn over 40,000. This placed the median salary in the \$25-30,000 category.

A significant number of PLA members reported that they have rejoined. 20% of the respondents indicate that they have quit PLA and joined again. The few comments received on this question say that it was usually because the person left the state or left the profession for a period.

Question 10 asked how long you have been affiliated with libraries. There is a corresponding increment in responses with every increment of years. So, while only 7 indicated "less than one year", 146 marked "more than 20 years".

Regarding attendance at chapter and state meetings, there was a weakness at the chapter level with 89 answering yes. 103 responded sometimes and 164 answered no.

As for the location of the state conference, Harrisburg was the favorite with 241. This was followed by Philadelphia with 228 and Pittsburgh with 193. The Poconos area was a strong 171 while Erie lagged far behind with 98.

The PLA Bulletin is read regularly by nearly all members. Most of the comments were favorable saying that this is an informative publication. A minority criticized it as being to fluffy and without substance. Some in this group called for a journal to be published by PLA.

Question 18 asked you to rate the work of PLA. This was done on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "not at all satisfied" and 5 being "extremely satisfied". To summarize the results, I will simply present the average for each category.

Overall Satisfaction with PLA	3.49
Local PLA Chapter	2.99
Divisions and Round Tables	2.30
PLA Bulletin	3.45
Professional Development	3.17
Educational Resources	3.17
Annual Conferences	3.58
Legislative Day	3.07

National Library Week	2.92
Continuing Education	3.10

Next, the respondents were asked to rank how much effort PLA should expend on the listed topics. Again, the range was 1 to 5, 1 being "not at all important", and 5 being "extremely important".

Legislative Day	3.81
Protecting Intellectual Freedom	4.04
Providing Quality Annual Conferences	4.44
Giving Awards	2.87
Maintaining Membership and Recruiting	4.00
Giving Scholarships	3.68
PLA Bulletin	4.00
Continuing Education	4.13

Of ALA Members

This survey mailing went out to members of ALA. Of the 178 returned, 31 are members of both PLA and ALA.

There were responses from 45 Pennsylvania counties. The top five responding counties, Allegheny, Philadelphia, Montgomery, Lancaster, and Delaware, accounted for 57% of the responses.

The educational attainment of this group is also dominated by the MLS. A total of 147 reported earning the MLS and 81 respondents indicate other graduate work.

The place of work for this group is notably different. There was a higher percentage (34% compared to 23%), of people in work places with 1-5 staff. There was also a higher percentage of academic libraries, 37% compared to 22%.

Like the PLA respondents this group is dominated by full time librarians with administrative duties.

Salary figures for this group were higher. The median category was \$30-35,000. Perhaps more telling though is the lower salary ranges. Of PLA members, 22% reported a salary of \$20,000 or less while only 10% of this group reported earning in that range.

Another significant difference between the two groups was the number of memberships maintained. PLA respondents listed 732 memberships in 19 separate associations. This amounts to 1.6 memberships per person. Of the ALA group, there were 396 memberships in 27 different associations for an average of 2.2 memberships per person.

As could be expected, the preferred conference sites for this group were Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Harrisburg. The more significant result, however, was that 50% of this group does not attend PLA conferences.

In ranking their satisfaction with PLA, there was an understandably low response rate. Just less than 1/3 of the respondents answered this question. Again, this is a 1-5 scale, 1 being lowest.

Overall Satisfaction with PLA	2.91
Local PLA Chapter	2.56
Divisions and Round Tables	2.73
PLA Bulletin	3.03
Professional Development	3.00
Educational Resources	2.95
Annual Conferences	3.32
Legislative Day	3.28
National Library Week	3.16
Continuing Education	2.93

Of this group, about 55% responded to the question of ranking how PLA should direct its efforts.

Legislative Day	3.71
Protecting Intellectual Freedom	4.23
Providing Quality Annual Conferences	4.14
Giving Awards	2.79
Maintaining Membership and Recruiting	3.59
Giving Scholarships	3.27
PLA Bulletin	3.57
Continuing Education	4.06

Conclusion

The membership survey has accomplished three things: 1) the association better understands what the membership thinks, 2) there is a better definition of who makes up the membership and 3) it defines a target market to expand the membership base.

On the first point, the membership welcomed, with relief it seemed, the opportunity to voice its opinion. It appears the ideas were pent up with no where to voice them. This is a shame since there are many good ideas that PLA would benefit from hearing. To many, the survey was a welcome, albeit overdue, undertaking. PLA should consider more frequent direct contact with its members asking for input.

The low scores on satisfaction with local chapters and divisions contributes to this feeling of non-involvement. These smaller units have the ability to make direct contact with the

members. Unfortunately, the membership is only marginally satisfied with these.

Numbers 2 and 3 relate closely, since we know now who makes up PLA, we also know who does not. Herein lies the potential target market to expand PLA's membership base.

It is understandable that school libraries prefer PSLA over PLA. Special libraries and academic libraries however, have no state level organization to opt for. Believing that PLA does not address their issues, they appear to be choosing national organizations instead of PLA.

By not appealing them, PLA is missing a fertile opportunity to expand its membership base. On looking at the salary charts, academic librarians are the group most heavily weighted at the high end of the pay scale. In fact, all other libraries are weighted heavier toward the high end than are public libraries.

With this in mind, a look at the "memberships chart" will show why it is desirable to attract members from these libraries. As expected, the higher the salary, the more likely the person is to belong to more than one organization. This is a savvy target market. They are comparison shopping for the organization that offers the most for them.

One of the strengths of a state organization over a national organization, is its ability to reach its members. It can do this through local chapters and special interest divisions. In addition to making a local presence, these offer real opportunities for participation in the association. Participation in a professional organization is often an important part of an academic's promotion and tenure process. Thus, there is a built in incentive for academic librarians to participate. Unfortunately, local chapters and divisions rank among the lowest on the satisfaction chart.

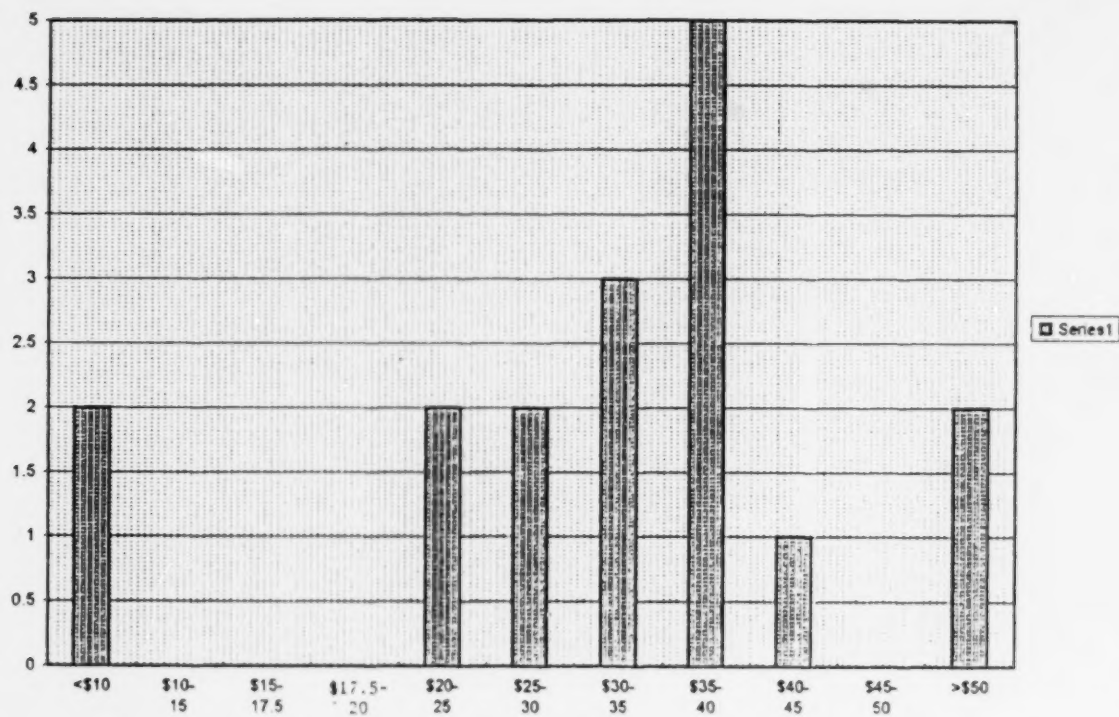
Furthermore, PLA presents itself as an association of all Library people. A look at the survey clearly shows that this is an organization heavily dominated by librarians. There are very few staff and trustee members. The survey does not offer much to explain this. It does, however, offer this as a second target group for recruitment.

It is my hope that the leadership of PLA will use this information to strengthen the association. There is, I believe, enough information to begin work on expanding the membership base (and thus political influence), and to work to correct the shortcomings as perceived by the membership. My work is done, I wish you well in yours.

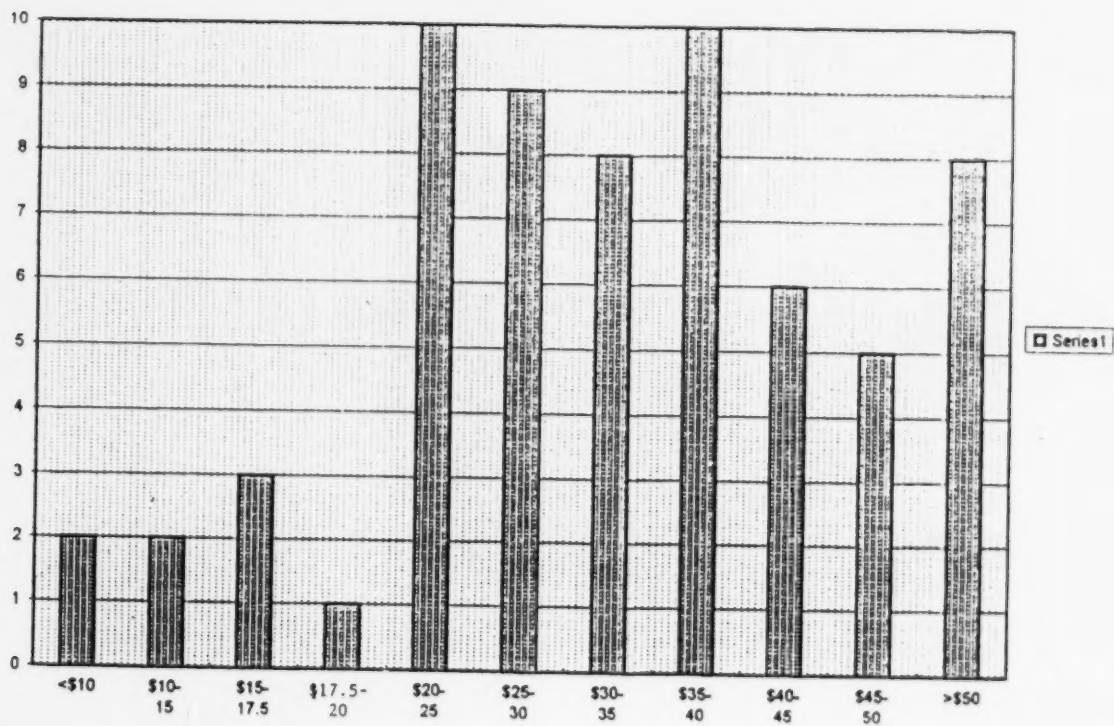
Submitted by,
Dave Obringer

APPENDIX A
Salary Charts and Memberships Chart

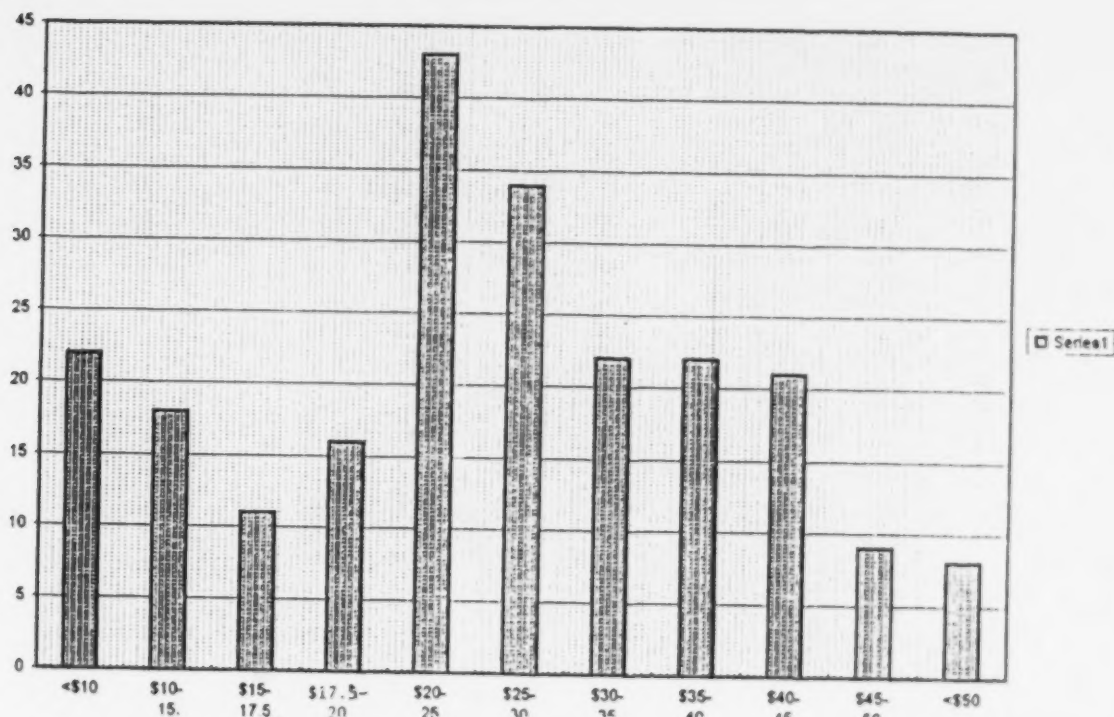
Government Library Salaries



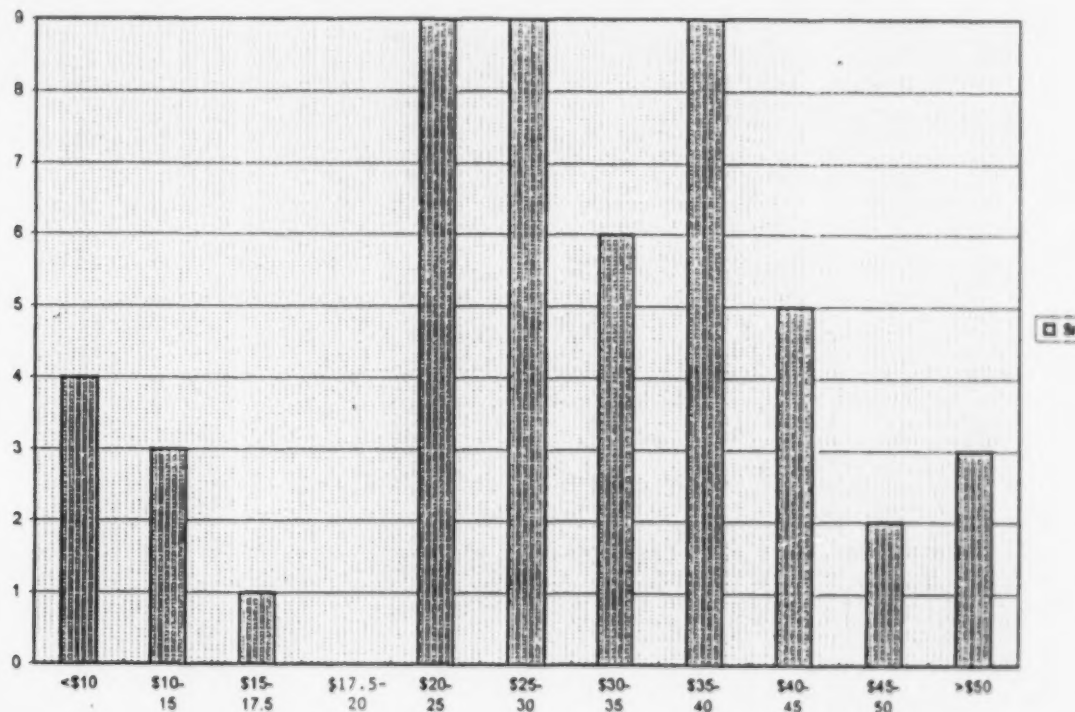
Library System Salaries



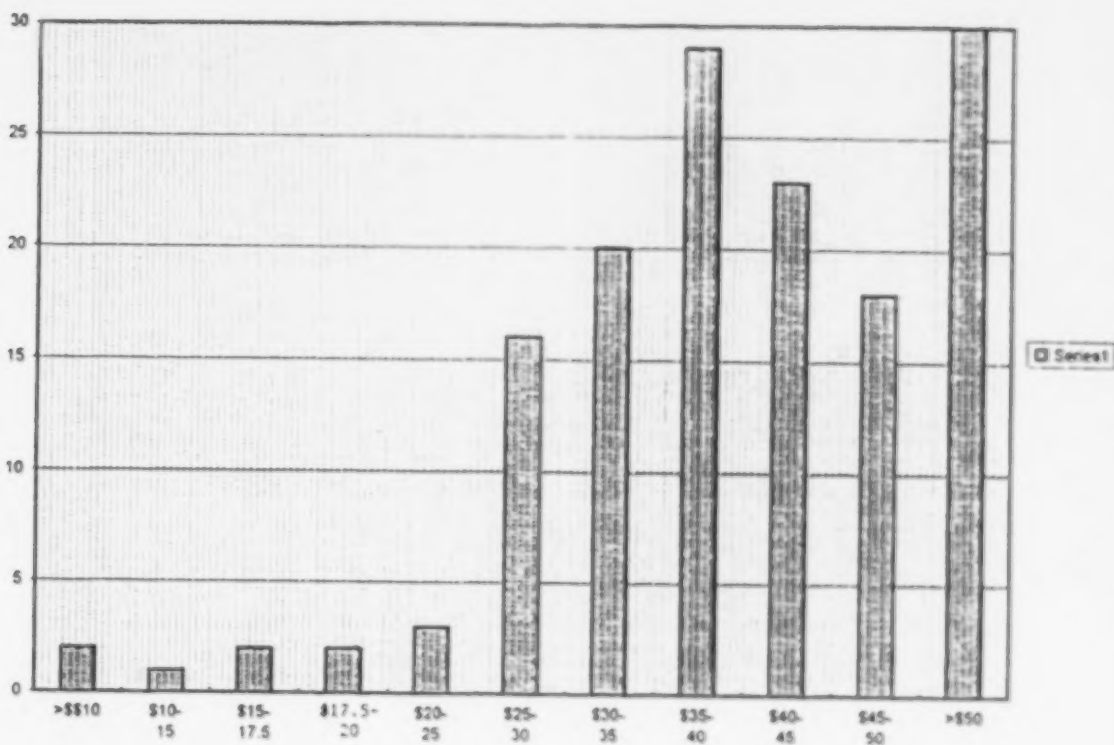
Public Library Salaries



Special Library Salaries



Academic Library Salaries



Page 1

Membership Chart

# organiz.	\$<10	\$10-15	\$15-17.5	\$17.5-20	\$20-25	\$25-30	\$30-35	\$35-40	\$40-45	\$45-50	greater than
1	10	12	7	17	29	31	26	19	11	7	50
2	7	8	4	8	22	31	26	29	28	14	23
3	2	3	2	3	12	8	21	18	14	18	21
4	1	1	0	0	2	4	3	8	6	2	10
5	0	0	0	1	0	4	1	2	2	2	1
6	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

APPENDIX B
Comments of PLA Members

COMMENTS

1. I do not have the time and money to attend the conferences that I know would be beneficial to me and my library. Any help on the state level is always greatly appreciated. PLA Bulletin keeps me in touch with other people and places and ideas. Although I cannot take a more active role in the association, I'm GLAD it's there.
2. PLA should try to increase the wages of all librarians. In the public sector, the husbands of librarians plus many volunteers are subsidizing our public libraries - what I call a real disgrace.
3. As a brand new member, I do not feel in a position to answer some of the questions.
4. Suggest local appointments with legislators as a better use of time and energy.
5. Your questions ##8, 9 are so ambiguously worded that you will never know what those who answer them mean to tell you. PLA focuses (or seems to focus) on public and school libraries & there is little of interest to academic librarians who tend to go to national conferences. If this would change, it would provide a service, save money, & involve more librarians in PLA activities.
6. With library budgets as tight as they are I feel it would be beneficial to provide scholarship money for conference attendance.
7. The future responsibilities of the medium sized library relative to health care is an area I believe the Pa Lib. Assn. could/should address. A group program for health care at an affordable rate based on salary/wage ranges of the smaller library.
8. Perhaps state library could pick up slack on continuing education.
9. I have enjoyed my membership in PLA throughout the years. Chapter activities have kept me involved, but each year it becomes harder for me to justify the expense in dues because I can attend so few meetings/conferences. Any of these activities must be on my own time and at my own expense - professional development is not part of our budget and even travel expenses have been eliminated for our director.

10. I have not yet been to annual conference, or I could not afford it when I was a student or when I was unemployed. It would be nice if PLA sponsored an annual scholarship to the conference for a deserving student. I also think it would be nice if PLA had a straight dues schedule like ALA. 75.00 for working women 26.00 if unemployed, etc. This would make paying dues easier.
11. The annual conference is a mystery to me. Though my round table and division are sponsoring programs, I have no idea how they were chosen. I never hear from my round table or division. Why is there no "call for papers?" We need to bring all librarians together. Separate organizations weaken our political voice. PLA dues a comparable to ALA, they need to come down or offer more.
12. Do not think legislative days are effective. More effective would be encouragement & instruction to libraries to stage local leg. events and to take local delegations to legislators to lobby.
13. Not listed in 19 - is the need for improvements to pay & working conditions for staff - also top priority should be getting better funding for libraries.
14.
 1. In an institution which supports some level of professional development, I am surrounded by colleagues who are not PLA members, and I'm not sure why. I hope you find some answers and take appropriate action.
 2. I believe the regular presence of a PLA lobbyist to be more effective than a 1x year turn out of library supporters.
 3. Giving awards too often becomes a popularity contest. There are many fine librarians and trustees who are never recognized. I think the award process may contribute to the perception that PLA is "cliquish."
 4. Would like to see more round table & division level activities on the local chapter level. This might make members feel more connected, especially if they don't get to attend the annual conference. Reasonably priced of course. \$25 may not seem like a lot, but if a library wants to send 3 or 4 employees, it adds up. Budgets are very tight!
 5. I think I belong to PLA more out of a sense of professional responsibility than from any great "satisfaction" with PLA. With low salaries + too much to do, I can see how easy it is to lose professional pride + responsibility. Fixing that may be more than any association can do.
15. Since I am the only full-time staff person and have been director for only 2 years, I have not had the time to do an evaluation of PLA. I don't think PLA addresses the rural library situation, but I really have not been attentive to the issues addressed by PLA.

16. Enjoy working on PLA committees, meeting new librarians and sharing ideas at meeting and conference.
17.
 1. Could the fiscal year be adjusted so dues don't come right before Christmas and at the same time as ALA (and other) dues?
 2. Since many people pay 1/2 year dues just to get discounted prices for the conference, why not make the membership year start shortly before the conference (and get them for a year).
 3. Continuing education and chances for professional development are slim here in the less populated portions of the state. Could the satellite dishes at district libraries be used to ease this problem?
18.
 1. When, due to weather, I called PLA to cancel attendance at the next day's Public Library Division meeting I was immediately told no refunds would be given. I hadn't even asked! (Although I think PR would have been better served if refunds had been made.)
 2. Need more information from PLA to help with local funding efforts. How many public libraries receive funding from school districts? What basis for those funds? etc. etc. State issued reports don't break local funding down into easily used data.
 3. I think Margaret Bauer does a good job representing the PLA.
 4. I have attended the past 4 conventions. Found all full of interesting programs.
19. There is a great deal of concern for keeping professionals education up to date. I am a disabled library technical assistant in transition and I'm sickened at what little effort is made to keep people like myself up-to-date even using assistive equipment or specialized formats. For upgrading (?) my skills there is no intellectual freedom only suggestions to go to a nursing home and uselessness (?) gracefully. Who will organize and protect our potential? (From a volunteer.)
20.
 1. PLA deals more with public libraries than academic libraries.
 2. More programs should be offered for continuing education.
 3. More direction should be given for leadership in a Pennsylvania "Internet" - like Ohio did with its "Ohionet."
21. I would like more continuing education opportunities locally. All I know about are PRLC programs which are very expensive and are on topics not relevant to my job at the present time. How about an optional Big Brother-Big Sister Program to match new members with more experienced librarians who work in similar settings.

22. Smaller libraries in rural areas need more emphasis, and will need lots of help in the new technology that is coming up in the future. What computers to purchase, what software is any good, and what services to offer on computers. Also on construction and remodeling to fit future needs. Do we need dishes for satellite info in the future? Telephone hookups, CD roms and much more. Which bar code system is best for a small library and who do we ask?
23. #19. Also continue small grant programs for non-matriculated, part-time students.
#12 & #13. Please continue surveys by mail since I cannot attend meetings or conferences.
24. Legislative day could be important as the culmination of a series of local and regional presentations to legislators. As is, it is very unsatisfactory.
25. Lobbying for funding should come long before the Governor has submitted his budget - Legislative Day should be the culmination of a strenuous effort - not the relative beginnings.
26. I am very much impressed by the current president & the people she is surrounded by, but I find a huge gap between the focus of PLA and the demands and pleasures of my job. I can hardly handle all the things I do on the job, much less find a place for myself in the grade scale of PLA. One thing bothers me - I'm not alone. There must be others who work in poorer, smaller libraries who feel left out. We have little political significance to the movers and shakers, and very often the response to our needs can turn out to be a stifling set of demands from the system instead of a study of what we do best.
27. More attention needs to be given to academic libraries. Legislative day doesn't do anything except give people a chance to meet with legislators who are already pro-library. Chapter meetings are scheduled at a very poor time because it is at the end of the semester which is the busiest time of the year and the hardest time to get away. Schedule chapter meetings earlier in the spring, please. Then I would be able to participate again.
28. PLA membership: I was employed in September and institution paid for my membership at time of employment then in January they had to pay again for the following year. Membership set up should be year to year from when you join. Money is hard enough to come by.
29. Committee participation and involvement enhances the purpose and benefit of PLA. More reference oriented programs at the annual conference would be appreciated.

30. Excellent communication from PLA to members. Thank you for all your efforts!
31. I am pleased that PLA has recently given comment to ALA on its displeasure with recent ALA activities. I dropped my membership in ALA because of this political activism for special causes. I am counting on PLA to keep this sort of partisan activity out of our association. I would also like to see PLA become much more active in promoting professional level salaries for PA librarians and paraprofessional staff who are necessary to all libraries. We must do more to get funding from State of PA. PLA legislative day has its purpose, but only as a show-piece, unless there can be another approach. I would like to see PLA spend more time encouraging local libraries to market to their local officials and all their legislators on a more personal approach than a once a year visit to the Capitol.
32. Legislative activities and information (gathering and distributing) are also extremely important to me - I hope they are included in Legislative Day category. This survey should reveal some interesting information!
33. Being from a small, rural library it is sometimes difficult to adapt some of PLA's "good" ideas which seem to be geared for the larger libraries. We can't just take an idea and use it - we have to take it and adopt it which takes time and manpower which libraries with a staff of 2.5 can't afford to do.
34. Dues are too high for the benefits and publications received.
35. Thank you for an excellent association and communication among libraries.
36. Besides protecting intellectual freedom add protecting library staff from abuse and harassment by patrons.
37. I do not attend as many functions of PLA as I would wish because of the difficulties involved in "manning" the library when I am the only full-timer and my part-time assistant has a second job. However - I do think that we small libraries have been somewhat forgotten in PLA's scheme of things. I guess this is the way things are to be.
38. I feel the state library should accept the responsibility for continuing ed. The bulletin needs to be a stronger voice of our organization.
39. PLA is too public library oriented.

40. PLA needs to recruit and welcome a more diverse membership. They must maintain a good relationship with the state library but at the same time be willing to disagree with state library leadership. PLA must take a firmer stand on social issues - especially with regard to censorship and intellectual freedom. PLA needs to become more active in ALA. I hear a lot of PLA members bemoaning ALA activities as not suitable and yet see only a few dozen PA librarians at ALA when I can afford to go. Pay equity is something PLA should tackle. They need to do more than go to Harrisburg for Legislative Day - EVERY DAY IS LEGISLATIVE DAY until our libraries and librarians are adequately funded.
41. As far as I can tell, there is very little PLA presence in the Pittsburgh area for academic librarians. The chapter seems to be very inactive - at least I hardly ever learn about programs. I do appreciate the work that PLA does on Legislative Day, etc. even though I usually cannot participate.
42. Western PA exists. Develop more resources and programs for members in the region.
43. Membership is a reflection of quality Services/programs provided by the organization.
44. The organization must be aggressive in encouraging professionalization, working with school librarians protecting intellectual freedom, not shying away from controversy, changing its legal status if necessary so it can lobby and aggressively fighting for better budgets and salaries.
45. A membership fee for unemployed librarians would be helpful.
46. As a new member this year I haven't had a chance to do much.
47. More annual meetings need to be held on this side of the state.
48. I think the single most important role of PLA should be lobbying at state level & keeping members informed. The 2nd most important role is educational - through conferences & workshops helping members grow professionally. Overall I think PLA is doing a good job. I look to ALA to protect intellectual freedom. They do an excellent job there. I'm glad PLA has not bogged down in ALA's quagmire about social issues, such as gays, etc.
49. Again, must reserve comment as I am quite new to PLA.
50. While I realize some political involvement is important, I feel education in general is too involved with politics (like, what does being a good library have to do with promoting gay rights? - Nothing!).

51. Plan more activities in western PA!! Can't afford 2 days of travel plus motel for a 1-day meeting = 3 days out of the library!
52. PLA, as compared to other state library associations or comparable size, is wishy-washy. It's not the individual leaders - personally they're a capable lot - but a general feeling of apathy that pervades the organization either PLA or PA librarians, lack pizzazz.
53. Most of your workshops are in Harrisburg & I have a hard time getting there. It would be nice if you had multiple sites for the workshops. Since I live near Philadelphia, that would be a nice location.
54. Keep up the good work!
55. I received two copies of this survey, this one and one on green paper. Please check to make sure I'm not in the computer twice. In question #17 "expences" is misspelled.
56. I believe PLA should continue to strengthen its role as an advocate for libraries and issues surrounding libraries - intellectual freedom, funding, image as resource, etc. The PLA should also focus on expanding opportunities for continuing education of both the professional & support staff in libraries. PLA is a great organization. We need to include new members/libraries to keep it strong.
57. The few staff are faced with a tremendous task in trying to meet all the needs of the very different libraries and members that make up their constituency. I marvel at both the energy and skill it must take to manage it all. I think PLA performs a vital job for PA libraries.
58. Qualify #13 - I checked conference actually attended. The areas I prefer would be Philadelphia & suburbs or Lancaster Co. area.
59. I would like to have personal contact at PLA, especially when I was a new member. Develop a network so that new member actually talk to someone other than the clerk in the billing dept.
60. Would have appreciated enclosed, addressed envelope - even without the stamp!
61. Is there any help available for librarians whose hours are cut for lower paid new staff?
62. Legislative Day should be in the fall - before the budget is set. Our legislators tell us we would be more effective if we came in the fall rather than spring.

63. Legislation efforts need to be more inclusive and more than focused on Legislation Day - regional activities should be developed.
64. PLA does not seem to have the gras roots support of library staff. I mostly see District Library Consultants and System Directors at meetings. I suspect the reason is a direct result of the woeful funding level of public libraries. I think DLCs should be doing a great deal more recruitment by urging their small library directors to participate rather than relying on the DLC for information all the time.
65. Continuing education personal responsibility though from time to time PLA should provide opportunity.
66. We really need master's level graduate credit courses offered in NEPA. Can PLA please do something about this!
67. Small enough organization to be personal. Any Internet possibility for PLA?
68. I think the conferences, especially the workshops, depend too much on the "how-I-run-my-library-good" kind of presentation and not enough on using people from business, marketing, personal management, and publishing. Surely we can learn a lot from other institutions about personal management (a weakness for all of the public library directors I know), planning new buildings, fund raising, etc. No more workshops where Elliot Shelkrot talks off-the-cuff for 20 minutes and never hits the advertised topic!
69. 1. I am particularly impressed with Margaret Bauer, your excellent Exec. Director. One occasion she was most responsible and helpful to me and I admire in general her work with PLA. When I was president of our board, I often received help from PLA via phone call.
2. We have a trustee problem - all lovely people, but not really active in the way they should be. Every time I attend a Trustee's conference, I wish they were there to gain some insight & enthusiasm. Is it possible that you could get some topnotch people to do some mini conferences on a more local level? - speakers like Bill Clear, Dennis (?) Leeper from PCBL come to mind - Our people need a shot-in-the-arm and aren't willing to go the distance and/or time to the big conferences. The right Trustee mix can be so important & we need help.
70. Leading membership by keeping us informed through bulletin; advocating and working to upgrade the profession; providing resources about insurance, pensions, salaries, etc. Continue to provide good CE topics and sessions. It would seem that membership would grow if we all talked about how good a job PLA is doing for librarians. This seems to me a well thought out and easy to do survey - hope it gives some good results. Thank you.

71. I think PLA should work on:
1. Improving public opinion and support, both financial and emotional, of libraries and library staff.
 2. Improve its own opinion of libraries and library staff.
72. I have found most PLA events geared more towards public libraries. I would like to become more involved but often have trouble getting the OK to be off work. I would like to have events at county level in addition to region/state.
73. I work in a predominantly black, urban area. The problems of literacy, how to reach the non-reading public, the disadvantaged and other such problems are not addressed by this organization. There is not even a Black Caucus of PLA which would pinpoint the problems of the inner city. Other states support such divisions within their chapters. PLA, I feel concentrates its efforts on the rural and western cities of the state, but Philadelphia is the fifth largest state in the union and it should receive at least that percentage of your attention and concern. I realize its easier to service those who think, act and have the same value system as you do, but when these groups make up the bulk of a state's population then, their state organization should recognize that they exist, address their problems, recognize their successors, and have some of their leaders on the board or visible in the overall management and elected officers of the association. Do you intend to go into the 21st century with your heads in the sand. Those you ignore will eventually cause you to go out of existence. Libraries are now on shifting sand. What do you think will be our future. If this organization is to survive it must change & speak to everyone.
74. Unanswered points reflect insufficient information on my part. Continuing education is important but unsure how much PLA is involved - offered by PLA or other source? Seminars? What is meant by continuing education exactly?
75. My perceptions of PLA are:
1. Public library oriented
 2. Active in Harrisburg & Philadelphia areas
 3. No visibility in W. Ps.
- I am not an active member & have no right to be critical.
76. I should probably get more involved but I just got MLS in May.
77. Need to run through a spell checker. Questions 7, 8, & 9 are confusing the way they are worded.

78. PLA had an abundance of info & resources at conferences & workshops when I was with public libraries. Special librarians - my present position - have to look elsewhere. I'd like to see 2 sessions at the annual conference for special - so I would have reason to attend. I gain from networking with librarians in any library field, but can't justify "lost" work time when it's not work specific.
79. Does PLA have a long range plan?
80. In section #18, I did not rate some items because I am not familiar with/have not participated in the activity. My future career plans include active participation in PLA.
81. PLA has become less & less relevant for academic libraries since I first joined. Rarely has annual conf. programs that interest me.
82. Would like to see continued Legislative effort to support the increasing of the state budget, items for libraries. Would like to see increasing efforts to increase professionalism, in particular increasing salaries and wages. Feel all efforts should be extended to encourage the paraprofessional libraries through their round table. With the upcoming elections - could PLA obtain the positions on the various state candidates on libraries. They will all say they are for them - like apple pie - but would they increase the budget for Access PA or any other programs, etc.?
83. Ongoing legislative efforts are even more important than single event Legislative Day. I feel PLA should be doing more to improve the public perception of the value of libraries and the profession. PLA should be concerned with establishing salary guidelines for decent salaries, in addition to genuine efforts to improve library funding. The value of PLA should be marketed to institutions so that paying memberships for staff would become a higher priority. More continuing ed., professional development & networking opportunities are needed for all levels of staff, so that paying one's own membership would also become a higher priority in spite of inadequate salaries. PLA serving as a clearing house for workshop & chapter meetings has been proposed & well-received by members to whom I have mentioned it.
84. I believe that if the bulletin and the annual conference are quality products, they will help attract new members. I do believe that PLA should promote libraries and librarians in the media, so the people of the commonwealth know what quality services are available in the state.

85. We need to continue initiatives that will help libraries market themselves & improve funding for them (esp. public libraries). The LevLane project was EXCELLENT. Update or at least revisit recommended minimum salary list. This survey - good idea! Legislative Day needs revamping - each year you need (unfortunately) a new, compelling reason for librarians to attend.
86. My legislator told me he would rather see me at home rather than travel to Harrisburg - annual conferences to not offer quantity or (not always) quality programs - I usually go to Ohio Library conference because they combine school, public, academic libraries & can offer much more variety at lower cost. I am recently involved with our chapter and have been asking the question "What can PLA offer that will make you want to join?" Unfortunately no one can answer the question.
87. As in most state organizations there seems to be more emphasis on public libraries than academic. The annual conferences are more often in the eastern part of the state than in the western.
88. Annual conferences continue to be dominated by programs for directors and children's librarians. Slim pickings for anyone else. Last conference in Philadelphia did have more on offer.
89. Legislative Day is not worth the trouble to go - if your legislative representative sees you only once a year - you're not doing your job! Zero in throughout the year, send telegrams, be creative! What does PLA really do for its members??
90. Would like to be more involved, but don't really have time. Do not know very much about PLA activities.
91. I have been member of PLA since 1966 (w/MLS) and seen lots of conferences & local meetings/sessions. I know that support for state associations/chapters, etc. comes first in professional training (ie, support from Library Schools) and secondly from support/attitude of each individual director. What a difference that Director makes!!
92. As a new member I feel unable to rate the effectiveness of the PLA but so far I am pleased with the correspondence I have received. I hope to become more active as time goes on. I am planning to return to school for my Master of Library Science. I am currently negotiating with my employer for tuition assistance. I am the library director for a private 2 year career oriented institution.

93. While legislative day is an important function, I wonder how effective it is in its current format. It is frustrating to find large numbers of library advocates do not attend, plus often the legislators themselves are not available for one reason or another. Because of most people's personal time constraints, it seems everyone would be better served if:
1. Individual libraries, staff and trustees met personally with legislators in their home offices. It would give everyone a chance to become better acquainted, etc.
 2. County-wide legislative breakfasts were implemented with county-wide libraries & legislators (some from neighboring counties could also be included) and library issues could be aired from a county viewpoint.
- I believe it is one of PLA's most important functions to keep membership current on any & all library legislation and/or budget issues so that members are knowledgeable enough to lobby via letters or phone calls to Harrisburg.
94. On item 19 - the issue isn't "Legislative Day," it's legislative issues. Our performance in Hbg. is terrible lately. Key 93 was a sham as far as libraries were concerned. We were duped.
95. While lobbying is very important role for PLA, perhaps we should rethink Legis. Day format - every other year? More local-based legislative activities?
96. Good job on survey & membership committee, Dave!
97. What is PLA's mission? to advocate for all libraries within the state of PA? or to support librarians themselves with continuing education conferences, etc.? To me, Legislative Day has little meaning - but for the libraries of PA it may be very important for PLA to continue to do this - a difficult task to sort these priorities, all of which seem important. What can PLA do that ALA does not?
98. I get discouraged by low pay for professional jobs - among other things.
99. I think I'll drop my membership next year because nothing in PLA pertains to education/school libraries. I was a public librarian (Branch Mgr/Children's Librarian) for 15 yrs. - 6 yrs. ago. However, PLA does nothing for the school librarian - so it's become a waste of money.
100. Not just Legislative Day but the ongoing need to have a continuous presence at any legislative function possible. We should combine forces again with the PSLA to present a united front to the Education Dept. from which our funding comes. We should also merge with PCBL to speak with one voice about libraries. At present we are too fragmented.

101. I don't feel PLA is doing anything in the area of salaries and benefits for public libraries. They should be forming an organization of librarians such as the teachers have done with PSEA. There are a lot of public librarians out there and they should be united with one voice promoting not only the professional image of librarians but also issues involving intellectual freedom, funding for all the services the public is demanding. The public and the legislature should be made aware of the costs of services they are receiving for free. PLA should be a strong voice in making everyone aware of the crisis facing many small public libraries. Libraries can no longer be everything to everyone. Something has to give. There is a large turnover in staff due to inadequate salaries and lack of benefits.
102. We will never get an institutional membership unless the institution can register for conferences. STAFF could share - going to special interest sessions when conference is local.
103. Consider more the needs of small town and rural libraries.
104. I have always felt the loss of the community college section of College & Research Libraries. I know of no state-wide forum for this group to meet and discuss.
105. Would like to see PLA more involved in providing 1 week long short courses on computers systems & searching in libraries.
106. Would like to see more effort in providing quality workshops or presentations at annual conferences.
107. If it were not for the importance of political agenda's regional conferencing and multi-state conferencing might hold more promise for more librarians. Financial realities may make the Internet and electronic conferencing a more viable means of professional networking now and in the future. Interpersonal networking and communication are key factors in professional development along with continuing education. Anything PLA does to promote these activities is important. Involving more librarians in the activities of chapters is more important than increasing attendance at the annual meeting - in my opinion. Promoting universal (libraries) access to electronic networks is very important.
108. For years I've used (and appreciated) PLA conferences and on occasion workshops, for my personal continuing education. I've also enjoyed programs/banquets etc. at conference - plus the friendly interaction w/others involved in the same type of duties as myself.

109. The annual conference serves many functions. It's especially useful for staff who do not participate in national associations and the topics seem to cover a broad spectrum of issues. I know Legislative Dy has had its problems, but PLA's most important obligation to its membership is support of libraries. It's the legislators who need to be informed.
110. PLA sponsored CE workshops are useful & affordable. Keep them coming! Awards & scholarships are also quite welcome & help librarians remain current esp. with regard to technology.
111. Holding a good annual conf. is the most important. I go if the programs interest me or if I am in office. I don't go for social purposes. (I will not be there this year because I will be gone from the library long enough otherwise.) Shows what happens when things lie on the kitchen table. As a former intellectual freedom committee chair & probably still chapter chair* I find that while it is important there isn't all that much we can do about it. Let me add something here. When my wife & I (both librarians) attended our first PLA conf. about 28 years ago (in a dreary place in the Poconos) we noticed even before someone said it at a meeting, "PLA stands for Public Library Association, we academic librarians are here as sort of Friends of the PL" (or words to that effect, it was one of the not-all-too-bright library directors of the day). It never has been all that fair a judgment & interest for academic librarians has waxed & waned except for the party goers (for whom every conf. is a vacation & it little matters what is presented). The point I want to make (at last!) is the first conf. in particular & subsequent ones as well are the PLA for most librarians. The rest (well, not the awards - I could skip them even with joy) is nice, but what one sees & hears at the meetings is what the PLA is. That, by the way, is one reason I have not been to a NW chapter meeting in some years.
112. Lobbying/Advocacy outside of legislative day - 5. Networking with other organizations to promote libraries, reading & an informed society - 3. Promotion of libraries generically - 4.
113. I would like to see statewide leadership from PLA, especially when commonwealth libraries is following its own agenda (not necessarily the same as PLA's, or PLA member institutions and individual members).

114. Need to be more vocal as an association for \$ from state level for public libraries. Find out where the red line of \$ is made and expose this level to the public statewide via letter to editor in local papers. Budget Secretary seems to have been the problem and PLA needs to let public know about him. Now he is taking over PHEA! We need to speak out as an association. Insist commissioner of libraries tells (gives) accurate data. Fear of her position costs \$ for public libraries.
115. I'm sure PLA could have been significantly more valuable to our library in many aspects had our director suggested and shared membership with the Board rather than discouraged it.
116. I think the PLA Bulletin could be updated in looks.
117. Legislative Day - does it "really" do anything or is it like Arbor Day?
118. I think the PLA dues are too high. PLA membership costs more than ALA membership. I know many library employees who do not join PLA because of the cost of dues.
119. Don't forget about us in the western half of the state.
120. I'm sorry I cannot comment on PLA, but I have not been a member for any length of time so my exposure has been very limited. I do, however, like what I have seen thus far & I feel that it can offer me a connection to resources & other librarians that I am interested in.
121. This should have been proofread more carefully. Typos give an unprofessional appearance.
122. PLA is too oriented to public libraries. PLA has no quality journal. Without a lasting publication like a journal PLA holds little interest for me.
123. I was very disappointed when I applied for a scholarship from P.L.A. to obtain my MLS that part-time students were not eligible. I hope that you can rectify this situation. I make \$12,000/year and it's going to cost me about that much over the next year to finish my education.
124. Perhaps this should refer to all legislative activities, not just Legislative Day. Lobbying by or our PLA Executive Director, local constituents (and librarians are constituents), and on the federal level are all extremely important. We must not abandon these activities - we may need to change our tactics, but we must remain involved!

125. An idea for PLA Bulletin:

There are many diverse & unusual libraries in PA. What about a column or article on how "the other half lives & what their job is like.) E.g. A zoo librarian (exactly what do they do - do they ever have furry visitors). AIDS library in Philadelphia (on a serious note). Unusual research questions in a law library (think about the possibilities are endless). Or the most outlandish questions a college reference library has been asked by college students - or the most unusual thing witnessed in a college library. Or how about the ten most unusual libraries in PA - what's it like working in them?

APPENDIX C

Comments of ALA-not-PIA Respondents

COMMENTS

1. Two things occur to me, the first being that if PLA wanted a good return on this survey, it should have included a return envelope, postage paid. Secondly, that this cheapness is penny wise and pound foolish. I've seen evidence of it before in other instances by PLA. It was one of the things that made me decide to drop my membership.
2. PLA has less to offer academic libraries than does ALA, etc.
3. As indicated above, until PLA does something to increase its value to academic libraries I will not be a member.
4. I have never belonged to PLA. I'm unemployed but function as a student (Library Science.)
5. Did not know about it (PLA). What is it? Its purpose?
6. I would be interested in finding out more about PLA.
7. Why send this to me? I'm a school librarian - and do not believe you meet my needs. Other lib. organizations do that quite well.
8. Just a quick reply. I do not belong to PLA due to more pressing opportunities via C.N.I., Educom, Cause, and several other organizations. I have no suggestions for improving PLA, it is just that the other organizations address my needs and don't leave time for PLA.
9. I am currently not a member of PLA.
10. I would welcome becoming a member, but it is so difficult to locate membership forms, one loses interest. Stamped self addressed envelopes for questionnaires would make responding faster.
11. I need some more information about PLA/membership and activities in Western PA.
12. Help in finding a job. Do you have job placement centers at the conferences? While attending library school in PA, I do not remember hearing much about the PLA. Do you have liaison with the library schools?
13. PLA is especially oriented to public and other general libraries. Most activities have little relevance to my work in a special research library in an academic setting.
14. I'm such a new member that I was not able to answer as best as I would have liked.

15. From observation, I think the overall quality of programs and publications of PLA have improved since the mid-1960s. However, as a 30 yr. employee at Free Library of Philadelphia, I felt some of my professional needs were filled by staff meetings and inservice training at FLP. Perhaps if association dues could be spaced through the year by ALA - Jan - PLA - June - SLA - Sept - one could better afford to pay one dues for all organizations.
16. I simply have no time to spend in the assn. So much of its effort seems to be dedicated to perpetuating itself as an org. rather than as an executive body.
17. I do not belong to PLA because of the high membership fees. If this were the only organization to which I needed to belong the situation might be different. But combined with other memberships PLA is too expensive.
18. I belong to so many library groups locally that I hesitate to add one more. PSLA seems to take care of us in PA. If PLA is supposed to be the official original division of ALA, can't there be some way to link the 2 memberships with a discount if you join both? If this isn't possible, can ALA (non PLA) members be put on PLA mailing lists for basic notices of meetings, specialized area workshops, etc. There might be more of an incentive to join for special librarians if we had an opportunity to participate occasionally on topics of interest. I am frustrated that as an ALA member, I cannot participate in local or regional meetings without having to pay for yet another membership fee. You managed, however, to get this survey to me! Suggestion: This form does not say where to return it. I hope sending it to the PLA address on the envelope was correct. This should not be assumed on surveys, as many people discard envelopes before responding. Just a helpful hint!
19. Surveys should have the return address imprinted. People usually discard the mailing envelopes and other extra papers. But fortunately, some people have a recycling bag which they can go to retrieve portions of the mailing that might contain an address.
20. I have been an active member of SLA for 7-1/2 years, during which time I have lived and worked in Pennsylvania. SLA meets my needs for contacts among my kind of special library. From my knowledge of PLA there isn't any additional benefits for me to become a PLA member. I was surprised how small the attendance was at the conference where I was a speaker.
21. I would appreciate more information on what PLA has to offer. I work at a pharmaceutical company in PA and I would be interested in participating in PLA programs.
22. Thank you for this opportunity for feedback!

23. Lower dues would create a larger membership.
24. I did a survey for Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship for ALA. We found that, more than anything, women wanted workshops/continuing ed. at the regional level (and local level) so they could improve skills. They badly wanted to feel that they could advance themselves in library careers. Many felt stuck. They wanted especially computer and administrative training. For results of survey contact Margaret Myers, OLPR, at ALA in Chicago. Or me, at Mansfield Univ. (717) 662-4686.
25. I belonged and attended one year - I felt that, as a school librarian it wasn't beneficial. I felt apart from group - Salaries are comfortable in schools. Many bitched about their salaries.
26. We have a very long way to go before school & public libraries can actively work together at a grass roots level to provide resources to educate America's people and develop lifelong readers & learners.
27. Conference fees, membership fees are too high.
28. Number 19 should have included recruiting a more diverse membership. PLA is known as a public and school librarians association which offers nothing to librarians not in those two areas. I've long felt PLA is missing the boat. Special librarians are numerous in the state and PLA doesn't address them at all. Membership recruitment should begin with identifying how many librarians there are in PA and what types of libraries they work in -- a state library association's membership should be proportionate to all kinds of librarians found in the state!
29. I currently only maintain membership in ALA. Am working as an administrative assistant in Sales/Marketing, legal secretary and/or paralegal depending on assignment through various local agencies. Was a school librarian for 12-1/2 yrs. at the elem. level and also worked for the H. W. Wilson Co. as an editor in the Standard Catalog Dept. Due to maintaining other memberships in the legal field - I do not pursue other library assoc. other than ALA to keep alert of the broad spectrum. Thank you for the opportunity to complete this survey.
30. PLA, as far as I am aware, does not have a lot of visibility among academic libraries.
31. Not a member. Find a slant of org. to public libraries - felt same way about similar assoc. in Calif. when I lived there. #18 & #19 are difficult for me to answer - I am not an active member at this time.

32. I'm not sure why I received this because I am not now - or ever have been - a member of PLA. I am a school district supervisor of information, technology and media services. When giving a range of members to select from, please avoid duplicating numbers. Your responses will not be accurate. Instead of 1-5, 5-10, 10-15, do 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20.
33. I would seem PLA means "Public" Library Association.
34. As there is encouragement to go, allowed to go, I would go if finances permitted. However, I don't know if I'll stay in PA after retirement, which if all goes well would be in 1999.
35. I am not aware of a PLA presence in the Pittsburgh area.
36. Could I join PLA without joining ALA? I am presently attending Kutztown Univ. - not ALA certified - & feel left out when everyone else seems to be ALA certified. I do not plan to work in a college or corporate library so I don't feel ALA membership is vital. As to PLA - I am still uncertain about its role. Any info will help me - I am just starting my 2nd year as librarian at my school.
37. Send me some literature & conference programs, etc. Maybe I'll participate.
38. I am especially committed to children's advocacy & intellectual freedom and gay and lesbian library issues. ALA gives me a forum to pursue these concerns.
39. For the enthusiastic professional: oh, the complications of retiring & decreasing energy/time/\$. Alas!
40. I'm not certain how I received this survey since I am not a member of this organization (nor do I plan to join it in the future).
41. I'm not a member - if the dues were nominal I might join, but they seem fairly steep.
42. PLA is too public library oriented. You offer nothing to me as a higher ed college librarian and administrator.
43. Since I'm a school librarian, my time & focus is with PSLA.
44. The most important thing that PLA could do in my opinion is to seek grants to implement statewide library automation, similar to OHIOLINK.
45. Perhaps I could be sent membership & organizational information.

46. Have always seen PLA - rightly or not - to have a largely public libraries/public services orientation. Neither of these is relevant to my position. However, I think the collections workshop I attended at Penn State a number of years ago was held by a PLA subdivision.
47. I have 2 main interests -
1. Intellectual freedom for children.
2. Improved salaries for librarians.
PLA is not exactly on the cutting edge of either of these issues.
48. New to PA (4 yrs. here) - was a member for years of OLA (Ohio Library Association) mostly because it was an unspoken requirement as a professional (Director very active & expres.). ALA better serves my needs & is a better buy for my limited membership dollars...when libraries are paid on levels that allow multiple memberships.
49. PLA has a natural tendency to appeal to public librarians and school librarians - at least that is my impression - as such, I only have limited common interests with many members. Still, at the one or two conferences I have attended, I have found the programs useful and informative. I particularly enjoyed the "convergence not divergence" program last year at Cubrini College.
50. How about expending more time/effort to improve Librarian salaries. Funding for small libraries. Networking through technology. Grants for technological improvements in small libraries.
51. I would be happy to consider membership if I had some information. Perhaps you should consider contacting new librarians in the state.
52. PLA may want to consider new initiatives - such as a statewide Listserv for Pennsylvania Librarians &/or a journal. Many state associations publish a journal, an avenue for librarians to publish research and how-to articles. I would certainly be interested in assisting with any such endeavor. You may also wish to look at your dues structure. I am hesitate to join PLA because the cost would be greater than my ALA membership. That just doesn't seem equitable to me. And how about making part-time students eligible for membership at student rates?
53. I would like to receive information on membership

54. I have not been involved enough with PLA to answer some questions. I dropped my membership after several years because I didn't feel that PLA addressed the needs of the school librarian. PSLA does. (PSLA is listed incorrectly in #11 & why is it listed last?) Joint membership could be encouraged. There is lots of room for two good organizations in the state.
55. I think that PLA is a worthwhile organization. It is more suitable for public library staff than school librarians. I only have the time (and money) to be involved with the library organizations to which I presently belong.
56. Need more for academic librarians. Not much for us in PLA. Understand that focus needs to be on public's cause of political situation, but don't forget we're out here too & we need a voice in our corner!
57. I tend to go to ALA, NASIG, and now NUGM (Notis) meetings. That's more than enough to get to!
58. I guess that I am just jaded with my membership in PLA. It costs too much, when all I get is the PLA bulletin. I delayed and delayed paying the dues because I didn't see the value. I stayed a member this long because I felt duty-bound to be a member of the state association but price made the difference.
59. Are school librarians members of PLA? If so send me a membership application!